

READINGS BOOKLET



GRADE 12 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION

English 30

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

June 1987

Alberta
EDUCATION

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JUNE 1987 ENGLISH 30 PART B - KEY

1. C	21. B	41. D	61. C
2. A	22. C	42. C	62. A
3. A	23. D	43. B	63. C
4. A	24. D	44. B	64. D
5. D	25. D	45. A	65. B
6. D	26. A	46. D	66. D
7. A	27. A	47. B	67. A
8. B	28. D	48. A	68. B
9. A	29. A	49. D	69. A
10. C	30. C	50. C	70. B
11. B	31. C	51. D	71. D
12. A	32. C	52. B	72. D
13. B	33. D	53. D	73. B
14. D	34. C	54. D	74. B
15. C	35. C	55. B	75. C
16. C	36. Deletedd	56. D	76. B
17. C	37. A	57. C	77. D
18. B	38. A	58. C	78. A
19. B	39. D	59. D	79. A
20. B	40. A	60. Deletedd	80. A

1.	C	15.	B	31.	D	47.	D	63.	C
2.	A	16.	O	32.	O	48.	C	64.	B
3.	A	17.	O	33.	O	49.	B	65.	C
4.	A	18.	O	34.	O	50.	B	66.	D
5.	B	19.	O	35.	O	51.	A	67.	B
6.	O	20.	B	36.	B	52.	O	68.	O
7.	A	21.	A	37.	A	53.	B	69.	A
8.	B	22.	C	38.	C	54.	A	70.	B
9.	A	23.	B	39.	B	55.	D	71.	A
10.	C	24.	C	40.	C	56.	C	72.	B
11.	B	25.	C	41.	C	57.	B	73.	D
12.	A	26.	C	42.	C	58.	B	74.	D
13.	B	27.	O	43.	O	59.	D	75.	B
14.	O	28.	C	44.	C	60.	D	76.	B
15.	C	29.	C	45.	B	61.	C	77.	C
16.	C	30.	Deleted	46.	B	62.	B	78.	A
17.	C	31.	A	47.	O	63.	C	79.	C
18.	O	32.	A	48.	C	64.	A	80.	A
19.	O	33.	B	49.	D	65.	D		
20.	A	34.	A	50.	A	66.	Deleted		

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**GRADE 12 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION
ENGLISH 30**

PART B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

READINGS BOOKLET

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Part B of the English 30 Diploma Examination has 80 questions in the Questions Booklet and 10 reading selections in the Readings Booklet.

BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE AN ENGLISH 30 QUESTIONS BOOKLET AND AN ENGLISH 30 READINGS BOOKLET.

YOU WILL HAVE 2 HOURS TO COMPLETE THIS EXAMINATION.

You may **NOT** use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials.

JUNE 1987

GRADE 11 ENGLISH EXAMINATION
ENGLISH 11

PART II: Reading (40 minutes)

READING BOOKLET

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Part II of the English 11 Diploma Examination has 50 questions in the Reading Booklet and 10 reading questions in the English Booklet.

BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE AN ENGLISH 11 QUESTION BOOKLET AND AN ENGLISH 11 READING BOOKLET.

YOU WILL HAVE 1 HOUR TO COMPLETE THIS EXAMINATION.

Do not turn on a dictionary, calculator, or other reference material.

- I. Read the excerpt from *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning* and answer questions 1 to 8 from your Questions Booklet.

from AS I WALKED OUT ONE MIDSUMMER MORNING

The stooping figure of my mother, waist-deep in the grass and caught there like a piece of sheep's wool, was the last I saw of my country home as I left it to discover the world. She stood old and bent at the top of the bank, silently watching me go, one gnarled red hand raised in farewell and blessing, not questioning why I went. At the bend of the road I looked back again and saw the gold light die behind her; then I turned the corner, passed the village school, and closed that part of my life for ever.

It was a bright Sunday morning in early June, the right time to be leaving home. My three sisters and a brother had already gone before me; two other brothers had yet to make up their minds. They were still sleeping that morning, but my mother had got up early and cooked me a heavy breakfast, had stood silently while I ate it, her hand on my chair, and had then helped me pack up my few belongings. There had been no fuss, no appeals, no attempts at advice or persuasion, only a long and searching look. Then with my bags on my back I'd gone out into the early sunshine and climbed through the long wet grass to the road.

I was nineteen years old, still soft at the edges, but with a confident belief in good fortune. I carried a small rolled-up tent, a violin in a blanket, a change of clothes and a tin of treacle biscuits. I was excited, vainglorious, knowing I had far to go; but not, as yet, how far. As I left home that morning and walked away from the sleeping village, it never occurred to me that others had done this before me.

I was propelled, of course, by the traditional forces that had sent many generations along this road — by the small tight valley closing in around one, stifling the breath with its mossy mouth, the cottage walls narrowing like the arms of an iron maiden, the local girls whispering, "Marry, and settle down." Months of restless unease, leading to this inevitable moment, had been spent wandering about the hills, mournfully whistling, and watching the high open fields stepping away eastwards under gigantic clouds.

And now I was on my journey, in a pair of thick boots and with a hazel stick in my hand. Naturally, I was going to London, which lay a hundred miles to the east; and it seemed equally obvious that I should go on foot. But first, as I'd never yet seen the sea, I thought I'd walk to the coast and find it. This would add another hundred miles to my journey, going by way of Southampton. But I had all the summer and all time to spend.

That first day alone — and now I was really alone at last — steadily declined in excitement and vigour. As I tramped through the dust towards the Wiltshire Downs a growing reluctance weighed me down. White elder-blossom and dog-roses hung in the hedges, blank as unwritten paper, and the hot empty road — there were few motor-cars then — reflected Sunday's waste and indifference. High sulky summer sucked me towards it, offering no resistance at all. Through the solitary morning and afternoon I found myself longing for some opposition or rescue, for the sound of hurrying footsteps coming after me and family voices calling me back.

Continued

45 None came. I was free. I was affronted by freedom. The day's silence said,
Go where you will. It's all yours. You asked for it. It's up to you now. You're
on your own, and nobody's going to stop you. As I walked, I was taunted by
echoes of home, by the tinkling sounds of the kitchen, shafts of sun from the
windows falling across the familiar furniture, across the bedroom and the bed I
50 had left.

When I judged it to be tea-time I sat on an old stone wall and opened my
tin of biscuits. As I ate them I could hear mother banging the kettle on the hob
and my brothers rattling their tea-cups. The treacle biscuits tasted sweetly of the
honeyed squalor of home — still only a dozen miles away.

55 I might have turned back then if it hadn't been for my brothers, but I couldn't
have borne the look on their faces. So I got off the wall and went on my way,
tossing the biscuits into a field. The long evening shadows pointed to folded
villages, homing cows and after-church walkers. I tramped the edge of the road,
watching my dusty feet, not stopping again for a couple of hours.

60 When darkness came, full of moths and beetles, I was too weary to put up
the tent. So I lay myself down in the middle of a field and stared up at the
brilliant stars. I was oppressed by the velvety emptiness of the world and the
swathes of soft grass I lay on. Then the fumes of the night finally put me to
sleep — my first night without a roof or bed.

65 I was woken soon after midnight by drizzling rain on my face, the sky black
and the stars all gone. Two cows stood over me, windily sighing, and the
wretchedness of that moment haunts me still. I crawled into a ditch and lay awake
till dawn, soaking alone in that nameless field. But when the sun rose in the
morning, the feeling of desolation was over. Birds sang, and the grass steamed
70 warmly. I got up and shook myself, ate a piece of cheese, and turned again to
the south.

Laurie Lee

II. Read "Horsepower" and answer questions 9 to 15 from your Questions Booklet.

HORSEPOWER

- Once,
horses knew poverty.
- Once,
horses bowed their heads shamefully
- 5 into their collars,
grateful for the blinders
that hid their eyes
from the pompous pity
of neighbours
- 10 with new tractors.
- Once,
horses were humiliated
by the swaggering machines.
- But the horse has made a comeback!
- 15 There is a revival of the horse!
Horses have right-of-way at intersections!
Horses can intimidate imported cars
and stare down two-ton trucks.
Horses have become sophisticated;
- 20 they trot haughtily around suburban paddocks
and are obligatory ornaments for acreages.
Horses know that every hobby farmer needs them
or would be sneered back to the inner city.
Horses have found a new sense of worth;
- 25 a horse is everyone's idea of success.
- Is it any wonder
horses are becoming snobs?
Can you blame them
for being embarrassed
- 30 at their working-class origins?
Wouldn't *you* try to cover up
that bastard country Clydesdale¹
in your family tree?
- Horses have as much right to be bourgeois as we do;
- 35 their parents worked hard to give them a good life.
Remember that
the next time
one bullies you off the road
on your way to work
- 40 on his way home
from a party.

Leona Gom

¹Clydesdale — heavy work horse

III. Read the scene from *The Tragedy of Coriolanus* and answer questions 16 to 23 from your Questions Booklet.

from THE TRAGEDY OF CORIOLANUS

CHARACTERS:

Menenius Agrippa – an upper-class Roman

Citizen – the common man, questioning the government of Rome

When confronted by a group of mutinous citizens, Agrippa attempts to defend the structure of the Roman state.

AGRIPPA: I shall tell you

A pretty tale: it may be you have heard it;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To scale't a little more.

- 5 **CITIZEN:** Well, I'll hear it, sir; yet you must not
think to fob off our disgrace¹ with a tale; but,
an't please you, deliver.

AGRIPPA: There was a time when all the body's members
Rebell'd against the belly; thus accus'd it:

- 10 That only like a gulf it did remain
I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand,² never bearing
Like labour with the rest, where th' other instruments
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
15 And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd, —

CITIZEN: Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

- AGRIPPA:** Sir, I shall tell you. — With a kind of smile,
20 Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus —
For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak — it taintingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt; even so most fitly
25 As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you.

CITIZEN: Your belly's answer? What!

- The kingly crowned head, the vigilant eye,
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
30 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
In this our fabric, if that they —

AGRIPPA: I will tell you;

- If you'll bestow a small, of what you have little,
35 Patience a while, you'st hear the belly's answer.

Continued

¹disgrace — hardship

²viand — food

CITIZEN: You're long about it.

AGRIPPA: Note me this, good friend;

Your most grave belly was deliberate,

Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:

40 'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he,

'That I receive the general food at first,

Which you do live upon; and fit it is,

Because I am the store-house and the shop

Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,

45 I send it through the rivers of your blood,

Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain;

And, through the cranks and offices of man,

The strongest nerves and small inferior veins

From me receive that natural competency

50 Whereby they live. And though that all at once,

You, my good friends,' — this says the belly, mark me, —

CITIZEN: Ay, sir; well, well.

AGRIPPA: 'Though all at once cannot

See what I do deliver out to each,

55 Yet I can make my audit up, that all

From me do back receive the flour of all,

And leave me but the bran.' What say you to 't?

CITIZEN: It was an answer: how apply you this?

AGRIPPA: The senators of Rome are this good belly,

60 And you the mutinous members; for, examine

Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly

Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find

No public benefit which you receive

But it proceeds or comes from them to you,

65 And no way from yourselves. What do you think,

You, the great toe of this assembly?

CITIZEN: I the great toe? Why the great toe?

AGRIPPA: For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,

Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:

70 Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,

Lead'st first to win some vantage.

But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:

Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;

The one side must have bale.³

William Shakespeare

³bale — destruction

IV. Read the excerpt from *Antigone* and answer questions 24 to 33 from your Questions Booklet.

from ANTIGONE

The play is set in ancient Greece in the city of Thebes. The old King Oedipus has died, and his brother-in-law, Creon, is now king. Oedipus' two sons have died in a civil war which they instigated, and Creon decrees that one of them, Polynices, be left unburied — carrion for the dogs and vultures. Polynices' young sister, Antigone, defies the edict and, risking punishment of death, covers the dishonored corpse. She is discovered in the act by guards, and is brought before her Uncle Creon.

CREON: Why did you try to bury your brother? . . .

ANTIGONE: I owed it to him. Those who are not buried wander eternally and find no rest. . . .

CREON: Polynices was a rebel and a traitor, and you know it.

5 ANTIGONE: He was my brother. . . .

CREON: You know the punishment I decreed for any person who attempted to give him burial.

ANTIGONE: Yes, I know the punishment.

10 CREON: Did you by any chance *act* on the assumption that a daughter of Oedipus, a daughter of Oedipus' stubborn pride, was *above* the law?

ANTIGONE: I did not act on that assumption.

15 CREON: Because if you had acted on that assumption, Antigone, you would have been deeply wrong. . . . You thought that because you come of the royal line, because you were my niece and were going to marry my son, I shouldn't dare have you killed.

ANTIGONE: You are mistaken. I never doubted for an instant that you would have me put to death.

(A pause, as CREON stares fixedly at her.)

20 CREON: Oedipus and his headstrong pride all over again. I can see your father in you. . . . Of course you thought that I should have you killed! Proud as you are, it seemed to you a natural climax in your existence. Your father was like that. For *him*, as for *you*, human happiness was meaningless. . . . You come of people for whom the human vestment is a kind of strait-jacket: it cracks at the seams: You spend your lives wriggling to get out of it.

25 Nothing less than a cosy tea-party with death and destiny will quench your thirst. . . . I stand here with both feet firm on the ground . . . and I have decided that so long as *I* am king — being less ambitious than your father was — I shall merely devote myself to introducing a little order into this absurd kingdom. . . . Don't think that being a king seems to me romantic.

30 It is my trade; a trade a man has to work at every day; and like every other trade, it isn't all beer and skittles. But since it is my trade, I mean to take it seriously. . . . *Kings*, my girl, have other things to do than to surrender themselves to their private feelings. *(He looks at her and smiles.)* Hand you over to be killed! I have *other* plans for you. You're going to marry Haemon,

35 and you're going to give him a sturdy boy. . . . Now, you will go straight

Continued

to your room and do as you have been told; and not a word about this to anybody. Don't fret about the guards; I'll see that their mouths are shut. And don't annihilate me with those eyes. I know that you think I am a brute, and I'm sure you must consider me very prosaic. But the fact is, I have
40 always been fond of you, stubborn though you always were. Don't forget that the first doll you ever had came from me. (*A pause. ANTIGONE says nothing, rises and crosses slowly below the table. CREON turns and watches her; then:*) Where are you going?

ANTIGONE (*Stops. Without any show of rebellion*): You know very well where
45 I am going. . . .

CREON: Antigone, don't you realize that if apart from those three guards — a single soul finds out what you have tried to do, it will be impossible for me to avoid putting you to death? There is still a chance that I can save you; but *only* if you keep this to yourself and give up your crazy purpose. . . .

50 ANTIGONE: I must go out and bury my brother. Those men have uncovered him. . . .

CREON: I shall save you yet. God knows . . . For it is a fact that this *whole* business is nothing but politics: the mournful shade of Polynices, the decomposing corpse, the sentimental weeping and the hysteria that you mistake for heroism, politics — nothing but politics. Look here. . . . I like things clean, shipshape,
55 well scrubbed. Don't think that I am not just as offended as you are by the thought of that — *meat* — rotting in the sun. . . . (*ANTIGONE turns her back to him.*) . . . It is vile; and I can tell you what I wouldn't tell anybody else: it's stupid, monstrously stupid. But the people of Thebes have got to have their noses rubbed into it a little longer. My God! If it was up to me, I
60 should have had your brother buried long ago as a mere matter of public hygiene. But if the feather-headed rabble I govern are to understand what's what, that *stench* has got to fill the town for a month!

ANTIGONE (*Turns partly to him*): You are a *loathsome* man!

65 CREON: I agree. My trade forces me to be. . . . but once I take on the job, I must do it properly.

ANTIGONE (*Turns fully to face him*): Why do you do it at all?

CREON: My dear, I woke up one morning and found myself king of Thebes. God knows, there were other things I loved in life more than power.

70 ANTIGONE: Then you should have said no.

CREON: Yes — Yes, I could have said no. Only, I felt that it would have been cowardly. I should have been like a workman who turns down a job that has to be done. So I said yes.

ANTIGONE: So much the worse for you, then. I didn't say yes. I can say *no* to anything I think vile, and I don't have to count the cost. But because you
75 said *yes* to your lust for power, all that you can do, for all of your crown, your trappings, and your guards — all that you can do is to have me killed. . . .

CREON: You amuse me.

ANTIGONE: Oh, no, I don't. I frighten you. That is why you talk about saving
80 me. . . . But you are going to *have* to put me to death today, and you know it. And it frightens you.

CREON: Very well. I am afraid, then. Does that satisfy you? I am afraid that if you insist upon it, I shall have to have you killed. And I don't want to.

ANTIGONE: I don't have to do things that I think are wrong. . . .

Continued

- 85 And now, though you don't want to, you are going to have me killed. And you call that being a king! . . .
- CREON: But God in Heaven! Won't you *try* to understand me! I'm trying hard enough to understand *you*. There *had* to be one man who said yes. Somebody *had* to agree to captain the ship. She had sprung a hundred leaks; she was
- 90 loaded to the waterline with crime, ignorance and poverty. The wheel was swinging with the wind. Every man-jack on board was about to drown — and only because the only thing they thought of was their own skins and their cheap little day-to-day traffic. Was that a time, do you think, for playing with words like yes and no? . . . You grab the wheel, you right the ship in
- 95 the face of a mountain of water; you shout an order, and if *one* man refuses to obey, you shoot — straight into the mob. Into the mob, I say! . . . The thing that drops when you shoot may be someone who poured you a drink the night before; but it has no name. And *you*, braced at the wheel, you have no name, either. Nothing has a name — except the ship, and the storm.
- 100 *Now* do you understand? . . . It is easy to say no.
- ANTIGONE: Not always.
- CREON: It is easy to say *no*. To say yes, you have to sweat and roll up your sleeves and plunge both hands into life up to the elbows. It is easy to say no, even if saying no means death. All you have to do is to sit still and
- 105 wait. Wait to go on living; wait to be killed. That is the coward's part. *No* is one of your man-made words. Can you imagine a world in which trees say *no* to the sap? In which beasts say *no* to hunger or to propagation? Animals are good, simple, tough. They move in droves, nudging one another onwards, all travelling the same road. Some of them keel over; but the rest
- 110 go on; and no matter how many may fall by the wayside, there are always those few left who go on bringing their young into the world, travelling the same road with the same obstinate will, unchanged from those who went before.
- ANTIGONE: *Animals!* Oh, what a *king* you could make, Creon, if only men were
- 115 animals!
- (*A pause. CREON turns and looks at her.*)
- CREON: You hold a treasure in your hands, Antigone — life, I mean. And you were about to throw it away. . . . Antigone, go find Haemon and get married quickly. Be happy. Life is not what you think it is. Life is a *child* playing
- 120 round your feet, a *tool* you hold firmly in your grip, a *bench* you sit down upon in the evening, in your garden. . . . Life is, perhaps, after all, nothing more than the happiness that you get out of it.
- ANTIGONE (*Murmurs, lost in thought*): Happiness —
- CREON (*Suddenly a little self-conscious*): Not much of a word, is it?
- 125 ANTIGONE (*Quietly*): What kind of happiness do you foresee for me? Paint me the picture of your happy Antigone. What are the unimportant little sins that I shall have to commit before I am allowed to sink my teeth into life and tear happiness from it? Tell me: to whom shall I have to lie? upon whom shall I have to fawn? to whom must I sell myself? Whom do you want me
- 130 to leave dying, while I turn away my eyes?
- CREON: Antigone, be quiet. . . . You don't know what you are talking about!
- ANTIGONE: I *do* know what I am talking about! It is *you* who can't hear me!

Continued

I am too far away from you now, talking to you from a kingdom you can't get into, with your preaching, and your politics, and your persuasive logic.
135 I laugh at your smugness, Creon, thinking you could prove me wrong by telling me vile stories about my brothers or alter my purpose with your platitudes about happiness!

CREON: It is *your* happiness, too, Antigone!

140 **ANTIGONE:** I *spit* on your idea of happiness! I *spit* on your idea of life — that life that must go on, come what may. You are all like dogs, that lick everything they smell. *You* with your promise of a humdrum happiness — provided a person doesn't ask too much of life. If life must be a thing of fear, and lying and compromise; if life cannot be free and incorruptible — then Creon, I choose death!

Jean Anouilh

V. Read “Poured Pyramids” and answer questions 34 to 40 from your Questions Booklet.

POURED PYRAMIDS

Scriptwriters for B-grade biblical movies love the scene: hundreds of sweating slaves, tormented by a pounding sun and stung by lashes from Egyptian soldiers' whips, strain against frayed hemp ropes. At a snail's pace, they drag massive limestone blocks across the desert floor and up wooden ramps to the top level of a half-built pyramid.

But if French chemist Joseph Davidovits is right, the scriptwriters will have to go back to their typewriters. Davidovits' work with what he calls geopolymerized limestone cement — a man-made material that is so natural-appearing, it can easily be mistaken for fresh-quarried rock — has prompted him to propose a more practical, if less cinematographically appealing, explanation for how the pyramids were built.

According to Davidovits, instead of painstakingly hauling limestone slabs, pyramid builders probably scurried to the construction site toting small baskets. Some of the baskets contained pulverized rock; others, assorted minerals that acted as binding catalysts; and yet others, water. The ingredients were emptied into wooden moulds and stirred, and when the moulds were removed in a few hours, a new block was in place. The builders then moved the moulds up another tier and repeated the process.

Davidovits describes his theory as “a crazy transition” that came to him in the early 1970s after he had spent two years in the laboratory trying to invent a formula for a strong, fireproof building material that could be made from natural substances without using great amounts of heat and energy.

He realized that by combining readily available materials — the calcium carbonate of limestone, alumina-rich silt from the Nile River, a common sodium-carbonate salt and minerals such as turquoise — the Egyptians of 3,500 years ago could have easily concocted a cement that would stand the test of time. More to the point, because the bonds in this material would have been chemical — unlike those in cement, which are purely mechanical — it would have been nearly indistinguishable from natural limestone.

Despite skepticism from such notable authorities as the British Museum's Michael S. Tite, who has examined Egyptian stones and says that everything he has found can be explained on the basis of natural origin, Davidovits took his theories to the great funerary complexes of Egypt's Old Kingdom.

His comparative examination of rocks in the ancient quarries and of those in the pyramids revealed some striking contradictions. X-ray defraction tests showed that the pyramid stones weigh less than their *in situ* counterparts. They are also identical to the material that Davidovits produced in his laboratory, containing elements needed for geopolymerized cement, which are not found in the natural rock. Oval-shaped stress bubbles, similar to those that form in worked clay, appear in the building stones. Davidovits even uncovered traces of organic fibres and human hair, which could have fallen into the slurry as workmen stirred the contents of the moulds.

Aside from providing compelling chemical evidence, Davidovits' theory goes a long way toward explaining some of the enigmas that have shrouded the construction of the great Egyptian tombs. The blocks, for instance, are fit so snugly that a razor blade could not be inserted between them — an all-but-impossible carving feat for a society that lacked metal instruments capable of cutting rock, but a

Continued

natural result if one stone were cast into a space beside its neighbour. The new theory also answers some of the logistical questions about pyramid construction: Pyramids contain as many as 2½ million stones, some outweighing a bus; even
50 with a king's lifetime to complete the job, it strains credibility to imagine a primitive people cutting and hauling that many stones.

Finally, Davidovits believes his new method explains why the great age of pyramid building came to an end. In an Old Kingdom preview of our own greed for nonrenewable resources, the ancient Egyptians exhausted their supplies of the
55 scarce minerals that are required as catalysts in geopolymerized cement.

And that may not be the only lesson these ancient stones can give 20th-century society. Davidovits, who is currently setting up an institute of applied archaeology at Barry University in Florida, says that the study of archaeological artifacts provides modern researchers access to a tremendous data bank. The
60 Egyptians' methods show that solid time-tested building material can be made with locally available substances, without recourse to vast amounts of energy. This, he claims, could be valuable in developing countries that now rely on North American and European building technology.

Barry Estabrook

VI. Read “Cassandra with a Tail” and answer questions 41 to 47 from your Questions Booklet.

CASSANDRA¹ WITH A TAIL

A cat stretches from one end
of my childhood to the other.
Those winters, by the hearth,
it spun a yarn of smoke into a ball.
5 At night, it flickered half-moon eyes
in the dark corners of the house.
By day, its tail twirled a signature
on the sky and pawed the air with grace,
gathering in its coat
10 the electricity of the storm
and smoothing it into glossy fur.
Wise. With cottony steps.

Self-possessed.
Just once she jumped out of her skin.
15 One peaceful evening
her tail shot up like a bottle brush
and she leapt onto the chandelier
wailing like an ambulance
as if all the voltage in her fur
20 exploded out in flashing rage.
None of us understood the cat’s prophecy.
We hissed at her to calm her down. . . . And
the earthquake nearly flattened the house.
The oracular cat disappeared,
25 with my childhood, forever.

But her miracle stayed with me.
Tonight, to my surprise,
she crept inside me.
Bristling with shock, I shook
30 and bounded back from wall to wall
yammering up a piercing cry
to call you wherever you are:
Listen. You have so little time.
Grab what you can,
35 whatever is dear, whatever you love.

Continued

¹Cassandra — daughter of Priam, King of Troy. Although endowed with the ability to foretell the future, the Fates decreed that she should never be believed.

Deep in the belly of the earth
an atomic blast is swelling up,
nurtured by electronic brains,
and produced by pulsing robots.
40 This green careening planet
spins blindly in the dark
so close to annihilation.
Listen. *No one listens.* Meow.

Blaga Dimitrova
Translated by *John Balaban*

VII. Read "To Err is Human" and answer questions 48 to 54 from your Questions Booklet.

TO ERR IS HUMAN

Everyone must have had at least one personal experience with a computer error by this time. Bank balances are suddenly reported to have jumped from \$379 into the millions, appeals for charitable contributions are mailed over and over to people with crazy-sounding names at your address, department stores send the wrong bills, utility companies write that they're turning everything off, that sort of thing. If you manage to get in touch with someone and complain, you then get instantaneously typed, guilty letters from the same computer, saying, "Our computer was in error, and an adjustment is being made in your account."

These are supposed to be the sheerest, blindest accidents. Mistakes are not believed to be part of the normal behavior of a good machine. If things go wrong, it must be a personal, human error, the result of fingering, tampering, a button getting stuck, someone hitting the wrong key. The computer, at its normal best, is infallible.

I wonder whether this can be true. After all, the whole point of computers is that they represent an extension of the human brain, vastly improved upon but nonetheless human, superhuman maybe. A good computer can think clearly and quickly enough to beat you at chess, and some of them have even been programmed to write obscure verse. They can do anything we can do, and more besides.

It is not yet known whether a computer has its own consciousness, and it would be hard to find out about this. When you walk into one of those great halls now built for huge machines, and stand listening, it is easy to imagine that the faint, distant noises are the sound of thinking, and the turning of the spools gives them the look of wild creatures rolling their eyes in the effort to concentrate, choking with information. But real thinking, and dreaming, are other matters.

On the other hand, the evidences of something like an *unconscious*, equivalent to ours, are all around, in every mail. As extensions of the human brain, they have been constructed with the same property of error, spontaneous, uncontrolled, and rich in possibilities.

Mistakes are at the very base of human thought, embedded there, feeding the structure like root nodules. If we were not provided with the knack of being wrong, we could never get anything useful done. We think our way along by choosing between right and wrong alternatives, and the wrong choices have to be made as frequently as the right ones. We get along in life this way. We are built to make mistakes, coded for error. . . .

A good laboratory, like a good bank or a corporation or government, has to run like a computer. Almost everything is done flawlessly, by the book, and all the numbers add up to the predicted sums. The days go by. And then, if it is a lucky day, and a lucky laboratory, somebody makes a mistake: the wrong buffer, something in one of the blanks, a decimal misplaced in reading counts, the warm room off by a degree and a half, a mouse out of his box, or just a misreading of the day's protocol. Whatever, when the results come in, something is obviously screwed up, and then the action can begin.

The misreading is not the important error; it opens the way. The next step is the crucial one. If the investigator can bring himself to say, "But even so, look at that!" then the new finding, whatever it is, is ready for snatching. What is

Continued

needed, for progress to be made, is the move based on the error. . . .

We are at our human finest, dancing with our minds, when there are more choices than two. Sometimes there are ten, even twenty different ways to go, all but one bound to be wrong, and the richness of selection in such situations can lift us onto totally new ground. This process is called exploration and is based on human fallibility. If we had only a single center in our brains, capable of responding only when a correct decision were to be made, instead of the jumble of different, credulous, easily conned clusters of neurones that provide for being flung off into blind alleys, up trees, down dead ends, out into blue sky, along wrong turnings, around bends, we could only stay the way we are today, stuck fast.

The lower animals do not have this splendid freedom. They are limited, most of them, to absolute infallibility. Cats, for all their good side, never make mistakes. I have never seen a maladroit, clumsy, or blundering cat. Dogs are sometimes fallible, occasionally able to make charming minor mistakes, but they get this way by trying to mimic their masters. Fish are flawless in everything they do. Individual cells in a tissue are mindless machines, perfect in their performance, as absolutely inhuman as bees.

We should have this in mind as we become dependent on more complex computers for the arrangement of our affairs. Give the computers their heads, I say; let them go their way. If we can learn to do this, turning our heads to one side and wincing while the work proceeds, the possibilities for the future of mankind, and computerkind, are limitless. Your average good computer can make calculations in an instant which would take a lifetime of slide rules for any of us. Think of what we could gain from the near infinity of precise, machine-made miscomputation which is now so easily within our grasp. We would begin the solving of some of our hardest problems. How, for instance, should we go about organizing ourselves for social living on a planetary scale, now that we have become, as a plain fact of life, a single community? We can assume, as a working hypothesis, that all the right ways of doing this are unworkable. What we need, then, for moving ahead, is a set of wrong alternatives much longer and more interesting than the short list of mistaken courses that any of us can think up right now. We need, in fact, an infinite list, and when it is printed out we need the computer to turn on itself and select, at random, the next way to go. If it is a big enough mistake, we could find ourselves on a new level, stunned, out in the clear, ready to move again.

Lewis Thomas

VIII. Read the excerpt from “Poetry” and answer questions 55 to 62 from your Questions Booklet.

from POETRY

“I wish poets could be clearer,” shouted my wife angrily from the next room.

Hers is a universal longing. We would all like it if the bards would make themselves plain, or we think we would. The poets, however, are not easily diverted from their high mysterious ways. A poet dares be just so clear and no clearer; he approaches lucid ground warily, like a mariner who is determined not to scrape his bottom on anything solid. A poet’s pleasure is to withhold a little of his meaning, to intensify by mystification. He unzips the veil from beauty, but does not remove it. A poet utterly clear is a trifle glaring.

The subject is a fascinating one. I think poetry is the greatest of the arts. It combines music and painting and story-telling and prophecy and the dance. It is religious in tone, scientific in attitude. A true poem contains the seed of wonder; but a bad poem, egg-fashion, stinks. I think there is no such thing as a long poem. If it is long it isn’t a poem; it is something else. A book like *John Brown’s Body*, for instance, is not a poem — it is a series of poems tied together with cord. Poetry is intensity, and nothing is intense for long.

Some poets are naturally clearer than others. To achieve great popularity or great fame it is of some advantage to be either extremely clear (like Edgar Guest¹) or thoroughly opaque (like Gertrude Stein²).

There are many types of poetical obscurity. There is the obscurity which results from the poet’s being mad. This is rare. Madness in poets is as uncommon as madness in dogs. A discouraging number of reputable poets are sane beyond recall. There is also the obscurity which is the result of the poet’s wishing to appear mad, even if only a little mad. This is rather common and rather dreadful. I know of nothing more distasteful than the work of a poet who has taken leave of his reason deliberately, as a commuter might of his wife.

Then there is the unintentional obscurity or muddiness, which comes from the inability of some writers to express even a simple idea without stirring up the bottom. And there is the obscurity which results when a fairly large thought is crammed into a three- or four-foot line. The function of poetry is to concentrate; but sometimes over-concentration occurs, and there is no more comfort in such a poem than there is in the subway at the peak hour.

Sometimes a poet becomes so completely absorbed in the lyrical possibilities of certain combinations of sounds that he forgets what he started out to say, if anything, and here again a nasty tangle results. This type of obscurity is one which I have great sympathy for: I know that quite frequently in the course of delivering himself of a poem a poet will find himself in possession of a lyric bauble — a line as smooth as velvet to the ear, as pretty as a feather to the eye, yet a line definitely out of plumb with the frame of the poem. What to do with a trinket like this is always troubling to a poet, who is naturally grateful to his Muse for small favors. Usually he just drops the shining object into the body of the poem somewhere and hopes it won’t look too giddy. (I sound as though I were contemptuous

Continued

¹Edgar Guest — a 20th-century American poet

²Gertrude Stein — a 20th-century American author

of poets; the fact is I am jealous of them. I would rather be one than anything).

45 My quarrel with poets (who will be surprised to learn that a quarrel is going on) is not that they are unclear but that they are too diligent. Diligence in a poet is the same as dishonesty in a bookkeeper. There are rafts of bards who are writing too much, too diligently, and too slyly. Few poets are willing to wait out their pregnancy — they prefer to have a premature baby and allow it to incubate after being safely delivered.

50 People are impressed by what they don't understand, and the poets take advantage of this. Gertrude Stein has had an amazing amount of newspaper space, out of all proportion to the pleasure she has given people by her writings, it seems to me, although I am just guessing. Miss Stein is preoccupied with an experimental sort of writing which she finds diverting and exciting and which is all right by
55 me. Her deep interest in the sound that words make is laudable; too little attention is paid by most writers to sound, and too many writers are completely tone-deaf. But on the other hand I am not ready to believe that any writer, except with dogged premeditation, would always work in so elegantly obscure and elliptical a fashion as the author of "A Rose is a rose" — never in a more conventional
60 manner. To be one hundred per cent roundabout one must be pure genius — and nobody is that good.

On the whole, I think my wife is right: the poets could be a little clearer and still not get over onto ground which is unsuitably solid. I am surprised that I have gone on this way about them. I too am cursed with diligence. I bite my
65 pencil and stare at a marked calendar.

E.B. White

- IX. Read “Madam Chairman, Honored Guests” and answer questions 63 to 70 from your Questions Booklet.

MADAM CHAIRMAN, HONORED GUESTS

We're here to honor gifted children
by launching a volume of their writings
With folded arms three politicians sit
on folding chairs in the little theatre
5 Each one represents someone important
who couldn't come but wanted to be here

An interpreter transforms every speech
into the fluent gestures of the deaf
The politicians have good words for the book
10 but their speeches are made of pre-fab phrases
many of them damaged in the assembly
“This is a warm-heartening event”
we're told

and the interpreter
15 makes a quick move with the hand
fingers outward away from the mouth
then traces the outline of a heart
with index fingers on the chest
I'm astounded to see a speech
20 gaining so much in the translation

Bert Almon

X. Read the excerpt from *The Right Cheek* and answer questions 71 to 80 from your Questions Booklet.

from THE RIGHT CHEEK

My father was never able to understand that at a certain age a child ceased being a child. We could be fifteen, eighteen, twenty, he always kept on treating us as though we were four-year-olds. The age of reason wasn't for us.

At the root of my father's injustice lay a profound ignorance of a child's
5 mental development. It wasn't because there was any shortage of children, but because he hadn't watched them grow up with interest and love. For instance, he could very well accuse us of having pencilled on the wall, even though we were ten or twelve and the scribbling was at the height of a child of three, mentally as well as physically. Furthermore, since we were no sooner accused than punished,
10 the possibility of being found innocent absolutely never entered into it. A punished child remains guilty. What's done is done, and the father of the family — maybe not other ones, but mine at any rate — is infallible by divine right. If we were too patently innocent, his bad humour knew no bounds.

After I left the convent I was forbidden to write any letters to anyone without
15 first asking his permission.

"You've disobeyed me again," he said one morning. "I had forbidden you to write letters without showing them to me."

"I didn't write any letters."

"Don't lie. I found your rough copy."

20 And he waved a scrap of paper on which my sister Thérèse, who was still just a baby, had told some little convent friend how she played with her dolls. The writing and the spelling were equally clumsy.

"It's Thérèse who wrote that."

My father folded his arms.

25 "Why don't you say straight out that I'm a fool? Thérèse? At her age? We'll soon see about that."

Summoned to the stand, Thérèse was forced to admit that she had authored the document. With that, my father suddenly believed he had fathered a genius, and in his astonishment he completely forgot about me.

30 Tyranny, of course, works much better on children than on adults. As the years sped by, he grew afraid of having to sacrifice a single scrap of his tyranny. That's why he refused to see that we had outgrown our childhood. He would have liked to control our least thoughts. Indeed, he thought he could. The certificate he had been awarded by Professor L.A. Harraden, Hypnotist, testified to that. It
35 said that the recipient had faithfully studied and completed the course in Modern Hypnotism and was now a perfect hypnotist, thoroughly qualified to practise the art. You should have seen the way my father looked us in the eye when he wanted to make us own up to something! This Professor Harraden — who described himself on the certificate as "the greatest hypnotist in the world" was undoubtedly
40 a nut, and possibly the most obscure hypnotist in the world into the bargain; for to my knowledge not a single one of us, despite the blue paternal stare, ever yielded up anything but the first lie on the tip of his tongue. The push-button lie. We had to be past masters of that art, since we might be interrogated at any minute on any subject under the sun.

45 "What are you humming? Why are you humming that? Where did you learn

Continued

that tune? Don't lie."

"What are you thinking about? And don't tell me you don't know. Don't lie."

"You smiled. Were you thinking about something dirty? Don't lie."

50 We had the answers down pat. It was a tune we had heard played in church last Sunday. I was just thinking about mending some socks for him. I was smiling to think of that awfully funny story he had told us one day about the time he lived on Anticosti Island. If he could be pushed on to the safe path of this period in his life, you could be sure to be left in peace for a good long while. You
55 didn't even have to listen. We had heard those anecdotes a thousand times, and we all knew the moral you were supposed to draw from them: that it was he who was the wisest, strongest, bravest, purest, smartest and most humble of all.

"I don't know," he would say, squirming a little, "whether it's that I've got more common sense — or judgment, or memory, or goodness or understanding
60 — than others, but if the truth must be known . . . et cetera, et cetera."

Poor father! He was really the only child among us, and to hear him rave on so made me feel something — it wasn't tenderness, you don't feel tenderness for someone who is a stranger to you, but indulgence perhaps — of the same kind one feels towards some young scamp in the street who tries to show off to
65 the passersby.

The business about the socks was pretty good, too. He was never happy unless the whole household was busy working for him. If I was sewing a button on my blouse, he would begin to fidget, then to grumble:

"I see you are sewing on a button. What about my buttons? I'll bet it's
70 donkey's years since you've looked them over."

It would never do, however, to fix our buttons on a Sunday. That wasn't allowed. On the other hand, we spent a good half of every Sunday doing little jobs for him — shining his shoes, pressing his suits, shortening this, lengthening that.

75 If it was one of his days of high anger, he would feverishly hunt through all his clothes to find something that wasn't in perfect shape. That was hard to find, for we knew the price there was to pay for the slightest neglect. Well, never mind! He would cut holes in his socks. Through the open door, we could sometimes see him, reflected in a couple of mirrors, painstakingly occupied at this modest
80 task.

At table it was the same story. Everyone had to wait on him. As the girls grew up, it became impossible for them to get a hot serving. Although we made meals that were copious and elaborate — this had become easier because over the years he had started to forget about centenarian foods — no matter what trouble
85 we took, he always found something missing.

"I'd rather have had peas with this."

Dine would leave the table to quickly heat up a can of peas.

"What about some ketchup?"

Françoise would get up.

90 "Or, no, make that hot relish."

I would get up.

"I'd like my bread toasted."

Marguerite would get up.

"This meal wasn't enough for me. Fry me some eggs."

Continued

95 Since Dine wasn't back yet, Françoise would get up again.

His appetite was limitless. Despite the four or five courses he tucked away, he always had room for a couple of fried eggs. Since he continuously told us that liars like us turned into thieves and assassins, that the person who steals an egg today will steal an ox tomorrow, we used to whisper to each other, splitting our
100 sides laughing:

"The person who eats an egg today will eat an ox tomorrow."

With this diet, he had a world of trouble keeping his weight down to two hundred and thirty pounds. Then Lent would come along. Naive as always, he would use this occasion to try to cheat heaven. He would start on a diet to lose
105 weight and call it penance. He thought that if he waited until Lent to start reducing they'd be taken in up there, and would tot it up in the column of mortifications. Incapable of moderation in anything, he would starve himself for forty days. The most immediate result of this fast was that it made him acutely jealous of us for all the things we allowed ourselves to eat in front of him. Even the plainest dishes
110 seemed awfully tempting to him.

"Well! Carrots *à la poulette*. You never make them when I'm eating."

"But we had them on Shrove Tuesday."

"Anyway, you don't make them often. But it's the same thing every year. As soon as I start my Lent, you bring out all your best recipes."

115 Not only was his bad humour aggravated — in certain circumstances even the worst can be worsened — but his health also suffered. The year he decided to eat nothing but lettuce for forty days, he suffered from some kind of complication of malnutrition which left red splotches all over his skin. He finally went to show this to the doctor, but he was careful not to say anything about his diet. Somewhat
120 perplexed, all the doctor could think of was to give him a Wasserman¹ test, which turned out negative, as you can well imagine. Sure that we were completely ignorant of such matters (but my sister's boy friend was a medical student and told us all about it), he had left the results of the test lying out on his desk. Which was just one other occasion when we nearly died laughing.

125 So each year we saw the holy season of Lent approach in fear and trembling. In the end we had the inspiration to suggest to him that such privations, while they didn't exactly make him seem older — it wouldn't have been wise to say that — at least made him seem less young, and he decided to cut out the penance. All the same, for seven or eight years, besides the habitual rhythms that ruled our
130 lives, we also had those seasons of mortification and of feasting.

Claire Martin

¹Wasserman test — a test to detect syphilis

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